

1875 MURDERS RECOUNTED

Last Indian Killings In McCulloch Occurred At Voca, Oldtimers Recall

Two Indian killings in McCulloch County have been written out from time to time: that of Leon Palmer, who was killed on Bear Creek about five or six miles southwest from Brady in January, 1878 and that of Cebe



SOLOMON DUNHAM

ens, who was killed in May, 1871, while rounding up wild horses in Salt Gap about three or four miles north of Melvin. A man named Smith was killed by Indians near Camp San Saba and is buried under a large live oak tree in the Tommy Brook field.

But, strange to say, the killing of Solomon Dunham and James Busick on March 18, 1875, on what is now known as the John Patton place a few miles north

Voca on the San Saba River, is never had any written publicity, so far as is known. Although the story is well known to all old-timers it has apparently never been committed to writing.

The two principles of the story are:

Solomon Dunham, who was born Dec. 14, 1825 near Delaware, Delaware County, Ohio. In 1850 he married Miss Polly Sherman and built a home and engaged in

farming and livestock raising near his birthplace. While living here his first child, Sarah E., and four other children were born. About 1864, he sold his farm and moved to Greenup, Ill. His wife died shortly thereafter and in 1869 he moved to Marshall County, Iowa. In 1873 or 1874 he visited Central Texas and settled near Voca where he lived until killed by the Indians in 1875.

James A. Busick was born in Madison County, Ohio, on April 15, 1846. He enlisted in the Union Army when 16 years of age and fought through the war after which he returned to his parents' home. On March 7, 1869, he was married to Miss Sarah E. Dunham. Early in 1875, upon the solicitation of his father-in-law, Solomon Dunham, he came to Texas where he was killed by the Indians as related in the following:

James A. Busick, wife and three small children went by train to Waco, Texas, from which place they went by stage to a point on the Colorado River. Mr. Busick left his family at the home of James Dawson and walked about 25 miles farther on to the home of his father-in-law. He stayed all night and the next

morning they got up early to catch a team of horses to go back and get his family. While hunting for the horses they were attacked by the Indians and killed. This part of the story is best told in a letter written by Thomas

Singer, a school teacher who was boarding with Mr. Dunham at the time. He was later elected first County Clerk of McCulloch County. The letter follows:

San Saba, Texas, March 23, 1875
Mr. Crug Busick,

Bemet, Ill.
Dear Sir:

I have a painful duty to perform in announcing to you that your brother, Mr. James Busick, and his father-in-law, Mr. Solomon Dunham, were both killed by the Indians on Wednesday last. Mr. Busick came to Waco, Texas, on the cars, and there hired a team to bring his family to San Saba, but stopped on the Colorado River, about ten miles from the town, and leaving his family with Riley Dawson went alone to



JAMES A. BUSICK

meet Mr. Dunham. On Thursday morning, just before daylight, they went out after the horses, intending to start after his family, and were killed. Mr. Busick was found about a mile from the house, his coat and shirt being taken away, and his boots lying near him. He was lanced seventeen times. Mr. Dunham was within half a mile of him, and was also terribly mangled and bruised.

There were about seven Indians or Mexicans, judging from their tracks. Mrs. Busick is of course terribly shocked at the news, and wants your advice as to what she shall do, being left without money and among strangers. Alfred her little brother, was brought to her yesterday. The people here are kind-hearted, and the deepest sympathy is felt by all, and everything that can possibly be done for her will be done; and as far as money can alleviate the trouble, it will be freely given. It was impossible to get word to Sarah in time for her to attend the funeral, but everything was taken care of by sympathizing friends. I was living with Mr. Dunham at the time, and will do all in my power to help. Please write as soon as you possibly can, and give her your advice as to what course to pursue. I gave Mr. Dunham's papers, deed to

From Bob A. Dunham, Madison, WI, we have this most interesting clipping that appeared in a 1946 TX paper. It tells the tragic story of Solomon Dunham (1825-1875) (7) (John 1, Jonathan 2, Daniel 3, Daniel 4, Jonathan 5, Harlock 6) & his son-in-law, James Busick.

Iowa farm, etc. to Mrs. Busick last evening.

If you could possibly arrange matters so that you could come down you had better do so, as your presence would greatly comfort Mrs. Busick. Please write upon receipt of this. I will write Mrs. Harlow Dunham this morning. Mrs. Busick's address will be care of Mr. Riley Dawson, San Saba, San Saba County, Texas.

With the deepest sympathy for you all, believe me to be,

Yours very sincerely,

Thomas Singer

Fort Mason, Mason Co., Texas

The bodies of the two slain men were buried in what is known as the Spiller Graveyard, which is located on the Cal Willis place about one mile from where Lost Creek flows into the San Saba River. It is presumed that they were both buried in the same grave as the gravestone bears the names of both. A number of people are buried there, among them being Joseph Miller, father of Uncle Marion (F. M.) Miller and several other children. Mr. Miller was buried with Masonic honors by the members of McCulloch Lodge No. 273 A. F. & A. M. which was located on Lost Creek McCulloch County, at that time. This lodge was later moved to Mason, Texas, and is still in existence. Another prominent man buried there is Nelson Willis, fat

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1875 MURDER (from p. 1)

f the late Dave and Bill Wil- Mrs. Spiller, mother of the large Spiller family, is also buried there.

Two living people, Mrs. Fannie Deans and Wade F. Spiller of Voca, remember the killing of Dunham and Busick quite well. Mrs. Deans, who was a small girl at the time, remembers Mrs. Busick and her three children well, as they lived in the home of Marion Miller, her father, for several months. She was very fond of Mrs. Busick and her children and recalls that Mrs. Busick rode horseback over to Camp San Saba or Peter's Prairie, to visit friends. Mr. Spiller, who was a lad of 16 years at the time, recalls seeing the two bodies being prepared for burial and the appearance of their wounds.

The place where they were killed was only two miles from Mr. Spiller's home.

After the tragic death of her father and husband, Mrs. Busick came to Voca and lived with the Marion Miller family for several months and possibly lived at Peter's Prairie or Camp San Saba for a time.

After three years she moved to Albion, Ill., where she lived on a small farm belonging to her father. On July 3, 1880, she married to John Rothbone. Ora L. Rothbone, the man responsible for most of the facts in this story, was born of this union Dec. 13, 1889. After graduating from Hume (Ill.) High School in 1910, he attended Butler College of Indianapolis, Ind., for two years and also married. In 1928 he moved to Dearborn, Mich., and started working for the Ford Motor Company, where he has been ever since and is at the present time in charge of the Tool and Book Store of the Training and Education Department of that organization.

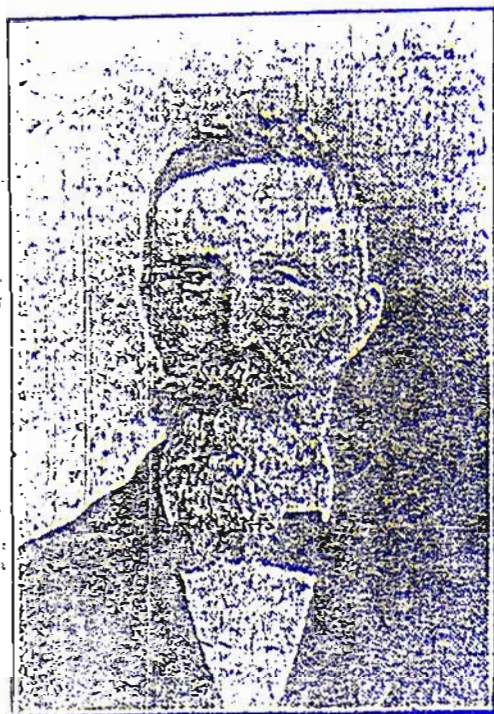
About a year ago Mr. Rothbone wrote The Brady Standard for information relative to the killing of his grandfather and his mother's first husband. His inquiry was published in The Standard and as a result he entered into correspondence with some local people. He is greatly interested in the history of his family and contemplates a trip to Texas this summer to visit the scene of the tragedy above described, and to visit with friends who have assisted him in locating the grave and unearthing other facts which he was not previously acquainted.

Samuel Dunham.

Samuel Dunham, one of Moxham's oldest and best residents, is dead, having passed away at the Dunham residence, No. 521 Grove avenue, at 8:10 o'clock, last evening, in his seventy-fourth year. Mr. Dunham suffered from an attack of pneumonia last February, other ailments having developed and resulted in death. His condition became critical on Sunday, when his two sons, Messrs. Russell and Lewis L. Dunham, of Wilmington, Del., were summoned to his bedside. The funeral will take place at 10 o'clock Friday forenoon, when services will be held at the Dunham home and interment will be made in Grandview Cemetery.

Services will be conducted by the Rev. E. A. Hibler, formerly pastor of the First Christian Church, but now in East End, Pittsburg, assisted by the Rev. H. W. Lyle, of the Second Christian Church.

The deceased was born on February 21, 1828, in Shade Township, Somerset County, being a son of Ezra and Mary



The Late Samuel Dunham.

Dunham, pioneer residents at Shade Furnace. Early in life Samuel Dunham engaged in the mercantile business at Shanksville and later at Buckstown. He came to Johnstown in 1890 and located in the Seventeenth Ward, where he conducted a store until 1906, when he retired on account of his health.

In February, 1867, the deceased and Miss Huldah Richardson, sister of Messrs. E. P. and R. L. Richardson, were united in marriage. Mrs. Dunham survives her husband, with two sons, four daughters, and eleven grandchildren. His sons are Messrs. Russell and Lewis L. Dunham, referred to

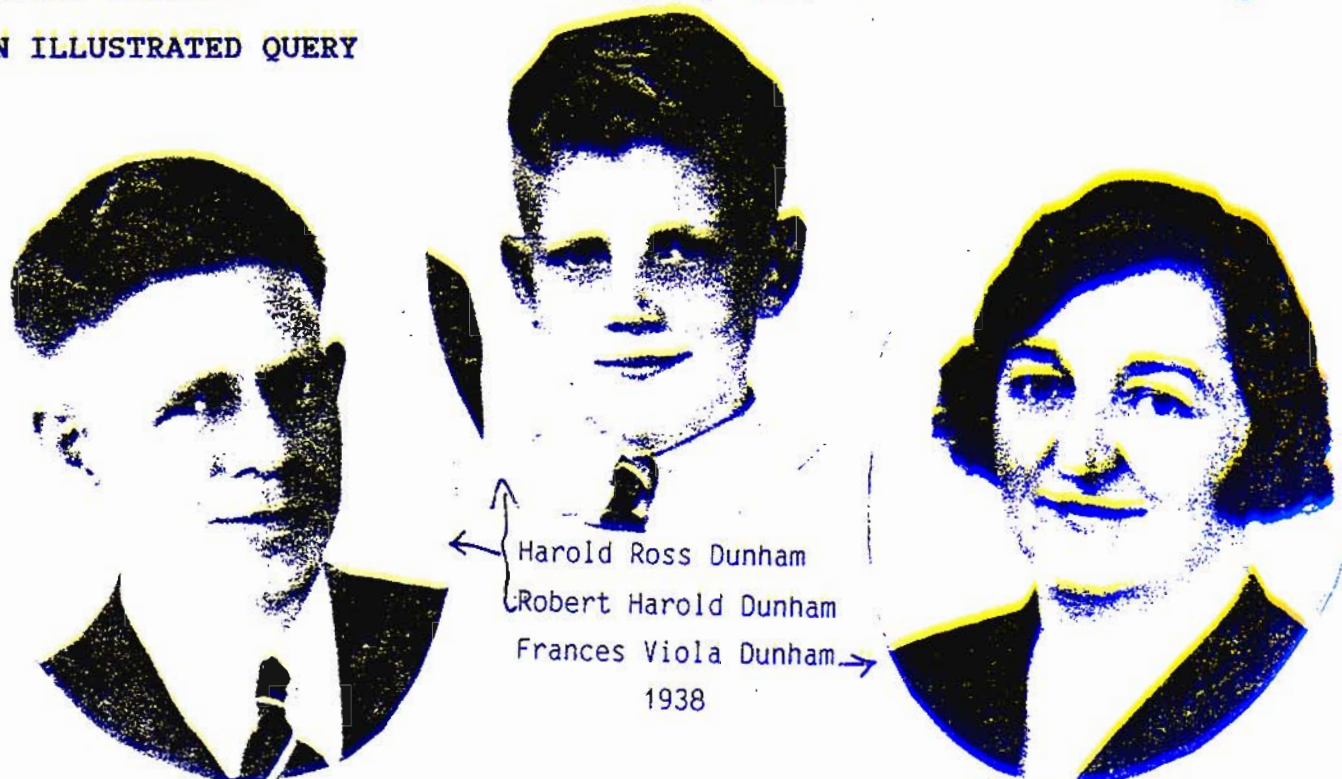
above, and the daughters are Jennie, wife of Dennis G. LaFrance, of Laynes street; Anna, wife of Harry W. Watson, of Grove avenue, and Misses Maude C. and M. Blanche Dunham, at home. Cora Francis Dunham, another daughter, died in infancy.

Samuel Dunham was a lifelong member of the Christian Church. He was formerly identified with the First Church, this city, and was one of the organizers of the Second congregation, Moxham, where he served for a long time as an Elder. He was a teacher in the Sunday School for several years and was made an honorary Elder some time ago on account of his health. During the Rebellion Mr. Dunham served over three years in the Fifty-fourth Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry. He went out as a private in Capt. Graham's company and was later made a Corporal and transferred to Capt. Hibler's company. Mr. Dunham was a member of Emory Fisher, Post 30, G. A. R., and was identified with the Fifty-fourth Regiment Association.

This July 11, 1911 obituary from a Moxham, PA, newspaper records the life of Samuel Dunham (1838-1911)(9)(Deacon John 1, Benijah 2, Edmund 3, Jonathan 4, David 5, Jonathan 6, Azariah 7, Ezra 8). It comes to DD from Don Berkebille, Mercersburg, PA. Thanks also go to Don for the picture on page 3 of the young lady. That picture is one of those endlessly intriguing unidentified photographs. Don believes it to be of Roseanna Dunham Berkebille (1830-1878), daughter of Ezra (8) & older sister of Samuel. Don has achieved the quite remarkable feat of collecting identified photos of all but 2 of his

(cont'd, page 3)

AN ILLUSTRATED QUERY



Harold Ross Dunham

Robert Harold Dunham

Frances Viola Dunham →

1938

MRS. ROBERT H. (BETTY JANE) DUNHAM, 2851 Sigma Rd, SE, KALKASKA, MI 49646-9271 is searching for the parents of her husband's great grandfather. He was FRIEND DUNHAM, born ca. 1850/52 in Kalamazoo, MI. He married Anna A. Carrier (1854-1934) in Deerfield, Van Buren Co., MI on July 4, 1869. (She was a widow at her death, & Friend was not buried with her.) His occupation was farmer & paper carrier. Friend & Anna had 2 sons: Nathan Albert (who was variously known as LATHAN) (b. 1872) & George Washington Dunham (1874-1953). George's son was Harold R. Dunham (1898-1971), who became the father of Robert H. Dunham, born in Grand Rapids, MI in 1928. Thus far the 1860 & 1870 Michigan census have been no help to Betty. Since she has no data regarding Friend's death, our suggestion would be that she check the 1880, 1900, 1910 & 1920 census to see where he might have been living at those points. Meanwhile, can any DD reader help with the problem?

SAMUEL DUNHAM, ETC. (from p. 2) great grandparents, & it seems more than likely that his search has narrowed down to one. The young woman's picture would seem to date from the right period, & it was in the right place (his grandmother's attic). Also, there is a striking resemblance to Roseanna's brother, Samuel Dunham.

F R E E H E L P

NANCY HONSBERGER, 429 E. Church St., Upper Sandusky, OH 43351-1012, writes to say: "Our genealogy society recently came into possession of 6 old photos taken at Trowbridge, Upper Sandusky, OH. We need help in identifying the people. The pictures came as a group from Arkansas & are probably all relatives of DAVID H. & HELEN DUNHAM of Parsons, KS & Rogers, AR. Mrs. Dunham had a brother (first name poss. TULL) who was a patient at Grant Hosp., Columbus, OH in May 1921. Mrs. Dunham was born Jan. 6, 1838, OH (to page 4)



FREE HELP (from p. 3) (maiden name unknown). 3 photos have no identification at all. One is of "Katharine, 18 years old, Jan. 23, 1903." Another is of "Minnie, died Dec. 1, 1903 at Marion, Ohio." Another is of 3 children, "Charlotte, Jamie & Robert." I attempted to get an obituary or death certificate for Minnie who died Dec. 1, 1903 from Marion, OH, but could find neither. If anyone can identify these as their family, they are welcome to have the photos for the cost of postage."

QUERY: JOHN CALLAHAN, PINE BAY FOREST, 7703-4TH Avenue, W., Bradenton, FL 34209 is searching for the parents of SAMUEL DUNHAM (born 1765, Newport, New London, RI; died 1839 Scriba, Oswego, NY). Samuel was a Revolutionary War soldier & was married to Mary Earl(e)(1774-1846). The IWD Dunham genealogy would indicate that this Samuel's line was: Deacon John 1, John 2, Samuel 3, William 4, Jonathan 5, Samuel 6. However, John Callahan doubts this because of the slight age difference between Jonathan 5 (b. 1715) & Samuel 6 (b. 1733) -- 18 years. Research efforts on this problem have been hampered by a fire that destroyed vital records in Scriba, NY. ((It is possible that a local historian in Scriba might still be able to help. Local historians in New York do a great job!)) Could any of our readers shed light on this problem?



THE FAMILY OF WILLIAM M. DUNHAM (1820-1879)(4)(Gershom 1, Constant 2, Stephen 3) included 9 sons & 3 daughters. (William's picture was shown in the 8/94 DD.) Here are 4 of the sons, all born in Nova Scotia & who later lived in Massachusetts: (L to R) CHARLES (b. 1861); BURTON (1844-1930); FREEMAN H. (1853-1937); & JAMES W. (1864-1928). The photo comes from Lilla Hayden, Framingham, MA, granddaughter of Freeman H. Dunham, & was probably taken in the early 1920's. Children who are not in this photo were: Lemuel T. (1846-1896); William Emerson (b. 1850); Lucy Dunham Foley (b. 1854); Eunice Dunham Woodward (b. 1856); Edith Dunham Benjamin (1859-1943); Perry E. (b. 1866); & Judson.

Q U E R Y

MRS. DAVID E. (AUDREY) HANCOCK, 1130 Dogwood Drive, Portage, MI 49002-5228:

Seek information on these DUNHAM families who I believe to be my ancestors based upon circumstantial evidence. I would appreciate anyone out there who might be able to help.

Oral family history stated that this family of DUNHAMS came from Connecticut where the DUNHAM ancestor was a merchant seaman or like. However, in my research of DUNHAMS, I tend to believe that my family of DUNHAMS came from what was called Connecticut Farms located in Union County, NJ, near Westfield, Union Co., NJ, and their ancestors were possibly emigrates from the state of Connecticut to NJ before then.

According to history, Connecticut Farms, NJ (now Union Co., NJ) was settled by many from Connecticut as early as 1667 when Rev. Abraham PEARSON and other families came from Branford & Guilford, CT. Previous to 1749, a number of families from Connecticut purchased a large tract of land and divided it into farms of a convenient size and gave it the name of "Connecticut Farms."

On page 780 in *History of Union and Middlesex Counties, New Jersey* we learn that Dunham's Corner was a well known cross-roads neighborhood, receiving its name from Capt. Jehu Dunham, the pioneer in the vicinity.

It is believed that the Joseph & Mary "Polly" (MILLER) DUNHAM mentioned in *Family Records, or GENEALOGIES OF THE FIRST SETTLERS OF PASSAIC VALLEY (And Vicinity)*, NJ by John LITTELL, 1976, p.508, are my ancestors. We read:

Joseph DUNHAM married Polly MILLER, daughter of Enoch (Jr.) & Eliza (ROSS) MILLER and had children. Joseph & Polly removed to Ohio, and had children: 1. Moses DUNHAM; 2. Ross DUNHAM, who lives in Westfield; 3. Enoch DUNHAM; 4. Asa DUNHAM; 5. Benjamin DUNHAM; 6. Sarah DUNHAM; and others.

It appears that Joseph & Polly (MILLER) DUNHAM emigrated to Hamilton Co., OH and land is recorded for him in Miami Co., OH. It is not known where Joseph died, but it appears that Mary "Polly" (MILLER) DUNHAM married a Mr. MILLS in Hamilton Co., OH. Litigation papers on heirs of Joseph Dunham were filed in Miami Co., OH where some of the children had settled appear to have listed both children and grandchildren, namely: Moses DUNHAM, Ross DUNHAM b c1788 NJ, Enoch DUNHAM, Asa DUNHAM, Benjamin DUNHAM, Sarah DUNHAM, Hettie DUNHAM b1811 NJ, Elvira DUNHAM, Levi DUNHAM, James DUNHAM, Mary DUNHAM, Marietta, child of James DUNHAM, deceased; children of Enoch DUNHAM, deceased of New York State; Asa DUNHAM; Benjamin DUNHAM, resident of Cincinnati, OH; Asa LITTLE & Mary Eliza LITTLE; Hannah and Joseph BUNNELL; Mary E. CLARK.

Ross DUNHAM married Sarah "Sally" ROLL of Westfield, Union Co., NJ and moved to OH. It is believed they had sons, James DUNHAM, (Sr.) who married an Anna SANDS in Miami Co., OH & Jacob Ross DUNHAM. James (Sr.) was a fifer in the Civil War. It is believed that James & Anna are the parents of James DUNHAM, Jr. who married Margaret Elizabeth SLONAKER. James Jr. & Margaret lived in Darke Co., OH. James Jr. was also in the Civil War and died as a P.O.W. at Andersonville, GA.

From there I descend from:

Gideon Winfield & Mary Jane (DUNHAM) CREAGER
Raymond Dale and Sarah Margaret (CREAGER) SHIELDS
Dale Caleb and Rita Marie (LEHMANN) SHIELDS
David Edward (Sr.) & Audrey Ann (SHIELDS) HANCOCK, Sr.

Any help would be greatly appreciated.